

**FINAL REPORT**  
OF THE  
**ROYAL COMMISSION**  
ON  
**COAL SUPPLIES.**

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**Part VIII.**

**REPORT**

OF  
PROFESSOR EDWARD HULL



THE AVAILABLE COAL RESOURCES OF DISTRICT G  
(IRELAND).

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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.

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## ROYAL COMMISSION ON COAL SUPPLIES.

## DISTRICT G.

London,

31st July, 1903.

MR LOBB.—I have the honour to present to your Lordship my Report on the quantity of coal remaining to be worked in Ireland.

Before proceeding to draw up this statement, I considered it desirable to personally visit this part of the United Kingdom in order to ascertain whether coal mining had been making progress, or otherwise, since the year 1890, at which time I had made a careful estimate of the coal resources of that country, and for this purpose I visited the only two districts in which there are any important deposits of mineral fuel—namely, the County of Tyrone in the north, and the counties of Kilkenny, Queen's and Carlow in the south. I regret to have to state that, as regards the former, coal-mining is almost a thing of the past, while as regards the latter, the output may be considered as practically stationary. This statement likewise holds good for what is known as "The Cavanagh Coal-field," situated on the table-lands of Leitrim, Roscommon and Sligo, except that the returns for the years 1900, 1901 and 1902 show a tendency to increase.

**Tyrone.**—The centre of this coal district is the manufacturing town of Coalisland, where it is known, from the reports of the late Sir Richard Griffith and the investigations of the Geological Survey, several valuable seams of coal, reaching an aggregate thickness of about 30 feet, occur in the direction of the shores of Lough Neagh. Coal was formerly worked at the Drumglass Colliery, with a thickness of about 4 feet, but owing to the influx of water from old workings, the mine was drowned out; and a singular fate befell a fresh attempt by a Manchester company, with disastrous results to the miners. At the time of my visit the engine house was being dismantled. The pits to the upper seams at Coalisland are all closed, except that of Messrs Carr and McNally, from which a small quantity of coal for the supply of their pottery works is extracted. Want of enterprise and capital, exceptional in Ulster, appears to prevent the opening up of a large mineral field in this county, capable of supplying fuel for the mills and factories of the surrounding country.

**Coal Seams of the Tyrone Coal-field.**

The following is the coal-series of this district.

	Pt. Ins.
Upper Coal (impure) . . . . .	2 2
Strata . . . . .	87 0
Amnagh Coal (soft) . . . . .	9 0
Strata . . . . .	55 0
Ross Coal . . . . .	3 0
Strata . . . . .	39 0
Slaining Coal . . . . .	2 10
Strata . . . . .	73 0
Blackwell Coal (good) . . . . .	5 0
Strata . . . . .	84 0
Gortashessa (Canal 2 ft. Coal 4 ft.) . . . . .	4 0
Strata . . . . .	75 0
Ballyboy Coal (tolphurous) . . . . .	3 0
Strata (about) . . . . .	195 0
Derry Coal (good) . . . . .	4 4
Strata . . . . .	150 0
Yard Coal . . . . .	3 0
Strata (thickness uncertain) . . . . .	3 0
Greagh Coal (with Canal) . . . . .	4 6
Strata (uncertain) . . . . .	4 6
Drumglass Main Coal . . . . .	4 0
Strata (variable) . . . . .	30 0
Lower Coal . . . . .	2 0

In 1890 I estimated the available quantity of coal in this district at 27,000,000 tons. (Rep. Coal Commission, Vol. I., p. 144. "Our Coal Resources at the close of the 19th Century," p. 91.)

**Kilkenny, Queen's and Tipperary.**—The coal worked in this district is anthracite or semi-bituminous, and is

worked in several collieries around Castlecomer, by Messrs. Dobbs and others, chiefly on the estate of Mr. Wandesforde. (I have to express my acknowledgments to Mr. Wandesforde as well as to Messrs. Dobbs and Meadows for the information they afforded on the occasion of my visit.) The uppermost seams have been worked out, and the principal workings are on the "Jarow" seam, which has an average thickness of about 12 inches; but it is traversed by a remarkable channel of very good coal in which the thickness is about 2 feet to 2 feet 6 inches. Below this are other thin seams, to prove which under the centre of the basin Mr. Wandesforde is putting down boreholes. The Tipperary coal-field is disconnected from that of Kilkenny and is of small extent. The principal market is the town of Kilkenny.

The following is the coal-series in the Kilkenny District:

	Pt. Ins.
Upper Beds of Sandstone and Shale . . . . .	12 0
Poanock Coal . . . . .	1 10
Strata . . . . .	45 0
Stony Coal . . . . .	3 0
Strata . . . . .	21 0
Double Seam . . . . .	5 0
Strata with Fossils . . . . .	120 0
Three-Foot Coal . . . . .	3 0
Strata . . . . .	180 0
Four-Foot Coal . . . . .	1 ft. 6 in. to 3 6
Strata . . . . .	300 0
Tewkerton (Shaham) Seams . . . . .	1 ft. 6 in. to 2 0

In 1890 I estimated the quantity of available coal in this district at 102,500,000 tons. This included the lower Shaham seam, of which little is known at present. But we have reliable returns sent in to the Secretary by Professor Henry Loom for the "Jarow" seam on the property of Mr. Wandesforde, consisting of 3,500 acres, amounting to 3,750,000 tons as the net available quantity remaining unworked. (Letter dated Newcastle-on-Tyne, 12th May, 1903.)

**Cavanagh Coal-Field.**—This district consists of a series of disconnected coal seams traversed by the River Arigna, and for the most part occupying table-lands with a thick covering of peat. The seams are thin and difficult of access, and have recently been officially reported on by Mr. David Rankine, C.E., of Glasgow. (Report dated 14th January, 1903.) The main coal measures 30 inches in thickness and is being worked in five places. The coal is described as "not high class," but useful where there is a good body of fuel and a strong draft. The coal is carted from the pits to the Arigna Railway Station. Mr. Rankine estimates the quantity of the main seam at 4,650,000 tons, of which 3,000,000 tons is "round coal" available for general use. The quantity of coal mined in 1902 was as follows:—

Leitrim	1,400 tons
Roscommon	9,455 "
Sligo	1,028 "
	11,918 tons.

The following is the coal-series of this district:

	Pt. Ins.
Sandstone, Flagstones, and Shales with Iron-stone (average) . . . . .	150 0
Coal (third seam) . . . . .	0 9
White Sandstone and Grey Clay (average) . . . . .	47 0
Coal (second seam) . . . . .	2 6
Sandstone and Shale (average) . . . . .	26 0
Coal (first seam) (slaty) . . . . .	1 ft. to 3 0
Sandstone and Shales . . . . .	

**Asric.**—This small coal tract, occupying part of the lofty hills which border the sea coast, may be considered as practically exhausted. The quantity of coal obtained from it in 1902 amounted only to 212 tons, according to the Government returns. Its chief importance lies in the fact that it contains a valuable seam of "black-

band" ironstone, which has been extracted by tunnelling from the face of the cliff, and has been shipped to Scotland for smelting.

The following is the coal-serve at Ballycastle:

	Pt.	Ins.
Top or Splint Coal - - - - -	3	0
Strata - - - - -	30	0
Second Coal - - - - -	3	0
Strata with "Black band" Ironstone -	240	0
Third or Main Coal - - - - -	6	0
Strata with "Black band" Ironstone -	90	0

*Net available quantity of coal remaining in the Irish Coal-fields.*

Taking the quantity stored at in the year 1880 at 177,000,000, and deducting the quantity raised down to the year 1902, amounting to 2,561,000 tons, there remain 174,438,000 tons, for the supply of future years.

I remain,

My Lord,

Your obedient Servant,

EDWARD HULL, COMMISSIONER.

To the Right Honourable

Lord Alton, Chairman.